We claim:

1. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including an elongated core defining a longitudinal core axis, the flange comprising:

a first annular wall configured to engage the core and oriented substantially perpendicular to the core axis when engaged to the core;

a second annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the core axis and offset from said first annular wall in a first axial direction relative to the core axis;

at least one connecting wall interconnecting said second annular wall and said first annular wall; and

a first annular rim attached to one of said first annular wall and said second annular wall and oriented substantially parallel to the core axis.

2. The flange of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of first support ridges projecting from said first annular wall in the first axial direction.

3. The flange of claim 2, further comprising a plurality of second support ridges projecting from said second annular wall in a second axial direction substantially opposite to said first axial direction.

4. The flange of claim 3, wherein sets of said first support ridges and sets of said second support ridges are alternatingly disposed in a circumferential direction relative to the core axis.

5. The flange of claim 3, wherein said plurality of second support ridges include second support ridges that are oriented in a radial direction and second support

ridges that are oriented in a circumferential direction relative to the core axis.

6. The flange of claim 2, wherein said at least one connecting wall comprises a plurality of connecting walls, at least one of said plurality of first support ridges being attached to at least one of said connecting walls.

7. The flange of claim 1, wherein said first annular wall includes a center portion configured to engage the core and a plurality of support beam walls emanating radially from said center portion.

8. The flange of claim 7, wherein said at least one connecting wall includes a plurality of pairs of connecting walls corresponding to each of said plurality of support beam walls, each of pairs of connecting walls connected to an associated one of said support beam walls to form a corresponding plurality of radially extending substantially U-shaped support beams.

9. The flange of claim 8, wherein at least one of said plurality of first support ridges is disposed within each of said plurality of support beams.

10. The flange of claim 8, wherein said plurality of first support ridges include support ridges oriented in a radial direction and oriented in a circumferential direction within each of said plurality of support beams.

11. The flange of claim 1, wherein:

said first annular wall includes a center portion configured to engage the core; and

said at least one connecting wall includes an annular connecting wall connecting said center portion of said first annular wall to said second annular wall.

12. The flange of claim 11, wherein said first annular rim is attached to said center portion of said first annular wall radially inboard of said annular connecting wall relative to the core axis.

13. The flange of claim 12, further comprising a second annular rim attached to said second annular wall radially outboard of said annular connecting wall.

14. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including an elongated core defining a longitudinal core axis, the flange comprising:

a first annular wall having a center portion configured to engage the core, said first annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the core axis when engaged to the core;

a second annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the core axis and offset from said first annular wall in a first axial direction relative to the core axis; and

a plurality of circumferentially spaced substantially U-shaped support beams emanating radially from said center portion, each of said support beams including a pair of radially extending connecting walls oriented substantially parallel to the core axis and connected to said second annular wall.

15. The flange of claim 14, further comprising a plurality of first support ridges projecting from said first annular wall in said first axial direction and disposed within said plurality of U-shaped support beams.

16. The flange of claim 15, wherein said plurality of first support ridges includes a plurality of radially extending first support ridges disposed within each of said plurality of U-shaped support beams.

17. The flange of claim 16, wherein said plurality of first support ridges includes at least one circumferentially extending first support ridge disposed within each of said plurality of U-shaped support beams and intersecting each of said plurality of radially extending first support ridges.

18. The flange of claim 14 further comprising a plurality of second support ridges projecting from said second annular wall in a second axial direction opposite said first axial direction and disposed between each of said plurality of U-shaped support beams.

19. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including an elongated core defining a longitudinal core axis, the flange comprising:

a first annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis;

a plurality of first support ridges projecting from said first annular wall in a first axial direction substantially parallel to the axis;

a second annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis and offset from said first annular wall in said first axial direction, said second annular wall being attached to said first annular wall; and

a plurality of second support ridges projecting from said second annular wall in a second axial direction substantially opposite to said first axial direction;

wherein said first support ridges and said second support ridges are all intersected by a common imaginary plane that is oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis.

20. The flange of claim 19, further comprising a groove configured to receive an end of the core, said groove being intersected by the common imaginary plane.

21. The flange of claim 19, further comprising a third annular wall oriented substantially parallel to the axis, said third annular wall being configured to engage the core, said third annular wall being intersected by the common imaginary plane.

22. The flange of claim 21, further comprising a fourth annular wall oriented substantially parallel to the axis, said third annular wall and said fourth annular wall defining a groove therebetween, said groove being configured to receive an end of the core, said fourth annular wall being intersected by the common imaginary plane.

23. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including an elongated core defining a longitudinal core axis, the flange comprising:

a first annular wall configured to engage the core and oriented substantially perpendicular to the core axis;

a plurality of first support ridges projecting from said first annular wall in a first axial direction substantially parallel to the axis; and

a second annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis and offset in said first axial direction from said first annular wall, said second annular wall being attached to said first annular wall.

24. The flange of claim 23, further comprising a plurality of second support ridges projecting from said second wall in a second axial direction substantially opposite to said first axial direction.

25. The flange of claim 24, wherein sets of said first support ridges and sets of said second support ridges are alternatingly disposed in a circumferential direction.

26. The flange of claim 24, wherein said first support ridges are oriented in both a first radial direction and a first circumferential direction, and said second support ridges are oriented in both a second radial direction and a second circumferential direction.

27. The flange of claim 23, further comprising at least one connecting wall interconnecting said first annular wall and said second annular wall.

28. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including an elongated core defining a longitudinal core axis, the flange comprising:

a first annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis and configured to engage the core;

a second annular wall oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis and offset in a first axial direction from said first annular wall, said second annular wall being attached to and disposed radially outward of said first annular wall;

a beam wall oriented substantially coplanar with said first annular wall and disposed radially outward of said first annular wall; and

at least one connecting wall interconnecting said second annular wall and said beam wall, said beam wall and said at least one connecting wall defining a support beam therebetween.

29. The flange of claim 28, further comprising a plurality of first support ridges projecting from said beam wall in the first axial direction.

30. The flange of claim 29, further comprising a plurality of second support ridges projecting from said second annular wall in a second axial direction substantially opposite to said first axial direction.

31. The flange of claim 30, wherein sets of said first support ridges and sets of said second support ridges are alternatingly disposed in a circumferential direction.

32. The flange of claim 30, wherein said second support ridges are oriented in both a radial direction and a circumferential direction.

33. The flange of claim 30, wherein at least one of said second support ridges is circumferentially aligned with an end wall of said support beam.

34. The flange of claim 33, further comprising an annular rim attached to said second annular wall and oriented substantially parallel to the axis, said rim being offset in a radially outward direction from said end wall of said support beam.

35. The flange of claim 29, wherein said at least one connecting wall comprises a plurality of connecting walls, at least one of said first support ridges being attached to at least one corresponding one of said connecting walls.

36. The flange of claim 29, wherein said first support ridges are oriented in both a radial direction and a circumferential direction.

37. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including a core, the flange comprising an annulus including an inner side configured to engage the core, said inner side having a plurality of circumferentially-spaced first indentations separated by a plurality of unindented portions interleaved between said indentations, said indentations being spaced around an entire circumference of said annulus such that each unindented portion spans less than 180° in a circumferential direction.

38. The flange of claim 37, wherein said annulus includes an outer side opposite said inner side, said outer side having a plurality of circumferentially-spaced second indentations disposed so as to be complementary to said first indentations.

39. The flange of claim 38, wherein each said unindented portion is aligned in an axial direction with a respective said second indentation.

40. The flange of claim 37, wherein said indentations are configured to be disposed radially outward of the core when the flange engages the core.

41. A flange for use in a reel for supporting a wound flexible medium, the reel including an elongated core defining a longitudinal core axis, the flange comprising:

a substantially planar first web oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis, said first web including:

a center portion configured to engage the core; and

a radially-oriented finger emanating from said center portion;

a substantially planar second web oriented substantially perpendicular to the axis and offset in a first axial direction from said first web, said second web being attached to and disposed radially outward of said first web; and

at least one connecting wall interconnecting said second web and said finger of said first web, said finger and said at least one connecting wall defining a support beam therebetween.

42. The flange of claim 41, further comprising a plurality of first support ridges projecting from said finger in the first axial direction.

43. The flange of claim 42, further comprising a plurality of second support ridges projecting from said second web in a second axial direction substantially opposite to said first axial direction.

44. The flange of claim 43, wherein sets of said first support ridges and sets of said second support ridges are alternatingly disposed in a circumferential direction.

45. The flange of claim 43, wherein said second support ridges are oriented in both a substantially radial direction and a substantially circumferential direction.

46. The flange of claim 43, wherein at least one of said second support ridges is circumferentially aligned with an end wall of said support beam.

47. The flange of claim 46, further comprising an annular rim attached to said second web and oriented substantially parallel to the axis, said rim being offset in a radially outward direction from said end wall of said support beam.

48. The flange of claim 42, wherein said at least one connecting wall comprises a plurality of connecting walls, at least one of said first support ridges being attached to at least one corresponding one of said connecting walls.

49. The flange of claim 42, wherein said first support ridges are oriented in both a substantially radial direction and a substantially circumferential direction.

50. The flange of claim 41, wherein said center portion of said web is substantially annular.